WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Achieving Growth Target for Agriculture Sector

1045. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether taking note of the fact that agriculture sector had not kept up with the pace required in the last decade, the Prime Minister has set a 3-4% growth target for agriculture;

(b) whether the P.M. also referred the recommendations of Vaidyanathan Task Force that went into problem of co-operatives;

(c) the other steps suggested in regard to agriculture and action proposed to be taken;

(d) whether the Ministry has initiated its efforts to achieve growth rate of 4% as envisaged by the P.M.; and

(e) if so, the steps being considered in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister in his speech on September 9, 2005 at the Chief Minister's Conference on Revival of Cooperative Credit Structure mentioned that for economy to grow at 7 to 8% per annum, agriculture must demonstrate a growth rate of about 4% per annum. He also referred to the recommendations of the Task Force constituted under the Chairmanship of A. Vaidyanathan for suggesting measures for revival of cooperative credit institutions. The report of the Task Force has suggested a road map for revitalizing the co-operative credit system including institutional restructuring and improvement in the regulatory mechanism.

(c) to (e) The Government have adopted a multi pronged strategy to address various issues of agriculture to ensure higher productivity and have taken initiatives in areas of cereals and non cereals crops, horticulture, livestock, fisheries to make agriculture demand driven and competitive. Equal emphasis is also given to timely availability of input and an overall thrust towards diversification into higher value produces and plantations. Initiatives taken towards these areas include launch of Horticulture Mission, undertaking activities with a mission approach for enhancing productivity and quality of cotton, oilseeds, pulses and coarse grains. The Union Budget 2005-06 has underscored the importance of providing enhanced credit coverage to the farming community, through increasing credit to

agriculture by 30% in 2005-06. Initiatives have also been taken to include micro irrigation, enhanced provision for the accelerated irrigation technology programme, strengthening of agricultural marketing infrastructure, development of backward and forward linkages through venture capital support and facilitations to growers, association for producing larger and better quality of fruits, flowers and vegetables.

Research on agricultural production

1046. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any periodic research in Agriculture has been conducted to increase agricultural production in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been under taken to monitor the impact of these researches on agricultural production; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The research is being carried out in the areas of crop improvement, management of horticultural crops, natural resource management, livestock improvement and management, fish production and processing, agricultural engineering and post harvest technology.

(c) and (d) There are large number of studies on impact of the researches on agricultural production. The outcome varies from crop to crop and region to region. Although there are considerable variations, the average rate of return to investment in agricultural research was about 70 per cent with a median value of more than 50 per cent. The results have shown that agricultural research has been major source of productivity growth in India.

Agriculture Coordination Committee

†1047. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are going to constitute an Agriculture Coordination Committee;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the main reasons for the constitution of the Committee?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.